



maineprisoneradvocacy.org
Maine 04252

Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (MPAC)
PO Box 446 Lisbon

To: Committee Members for Criminal Justice
Fm: Joseph Jackson: MPAC Executive Director
Re: letter in support LD 178

03/13/2023

Senator Anne Beebe-Center
Representative Suzanne Salisbury
Honorable members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

My name is Joseph Jackson, and I'm the Executive Director of Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (MPAC). I am a member of the commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole. I'm also a system-impacted individual who spent over 20 years in the Maine Department of Corrections.

As a member of the commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole. I attended every meeting. I listen to experts, researchers, academics, system-impacted people and victims of crime overwhelmingly support reestablishing parole in Maine.

I was part of a contingent of commission members who visited Maine State Prison and the Women's Center in Warren. During our visit men and women shared stories of starting their incarceration as youth, with a handful naming their crimes that were committed when they were in their teens and that they had spent more years incarcerated than their ages at the time of incarceration.

The men and women shared the activities and programs they completed while incarcerated. Their resumes were impressive and represented personal transformations that brought me to tears.

I am in favor of reestablishing parole, because as a formerly incarcerated individual, I too took advantage of transformational programs and activities, and similarly received little recognition or acknowledgment from the state that I had done so.

I favor reestablishing parole because I believe the state should have the ability to recognize and honor the transformational power of their programming. Reestablishing parole simply expands their power of custody over individuals in the community to those not currently eligible for community custody.

Reestablishing parole is good for everyone. Parole is a tool considered best practice reentry transition back into the community. The process promotes rehabilitation and provides opportunities for returning citizens to contribute to their communities. Parole means fewer people will be damaged by the long-term effects of imprisonment.

Lastly, reestablishing parole will reintroduce a structure that instills hope, and offers redemption. It will allow the Department of Corrections to live up to its mission of "... empowering change and restoring lives".

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Joseph N. Jackson : Executive Director
Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition
Maine Inside Out: Manager of Community Programs.
Maine Youth Justice: Campaign Advisor
3 Angel Street Lisbon Falls Maine 04252
jackson.joseph1966@gmail.com
2078441470